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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [UNSC](#) [HA](#)  
SUBJECT: HAITI: UN SECRETARIAT GREETINGS DEPARTMENTAL  
STABILIZATION INITIATIVE WITH ENTHUSIASM

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor William J. Brencick, per 1.  
4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary. During meetings with UN Secretariat officials in New York on April 18, Interim S/CRS Head Ambassador Tim Carney outlined the USG's Departmental Stabilization Initiative (DSI) to promote reform and reconstruction efforts in troubled areas of Haiti outside of Port-au-Prince. The Ambassador emphasized that planning for the DSI is at a preliminary stage and that a USG design team intends to travel to Haiti on April 24 to consult with officials from the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and other bilateral donors. Both DPKO U/SYG Jean-Marie Guehenno and DPA A/SYG Angela Kane welcomed renewed U.S. involvement as a means to address Haiti's structural weaknesses in the police and justice sectors and to increase the capacity of local governance institutions. Emphasizing the importance of links between the DSI and officials from MINUSTAH and other donors, Guehenno agreed that a national coordination committee -- possibly co-chaired by Haiti and the UN -- could help de-conflict assistance efforts across the country. A/SYG Kane emphasized the critical need to improve security to proceed with development projects. On the topic of local elections, DPA electoral assistance officials said several issues -- including Haiti's capacity to support 9,000 local officials, the UN's election funding gap, the need for new boundary delimitations, and the end of the CEP's mandate -- must be resolved before this vote can be held. Over lunch, Guehenno listed several candidates in the race to replace Juan Valdes as SRSG in Haiti; DPKO staff later suggested that former Guatemalan PermRep to the UN Gert Rosenthal is the front-runner. End Summary.

12. (SBU) Interim Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) Ambassador Tim Carney met on April 18 with Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Undersecretary (U/SYG) Jean-Marie Guehenno and Department of Political Affairs (DPA) Assistant Secretary-General (A/SYG) Angela Kane and their respective staff to discuss the DSI and other issues concerning Haiti. Carney was accompanied by WHA/CAR Director Brian Nichols, S/CRS officers Paula Lynch and Jonas Wechsler, IO/PSC officer Larry Mrozinski, and Poloff (notetaker).

Ambassador Carney Describes the DSI

13. (SBU) Carney described the Departmental Stabilization Initiative (DSI) as a decentralized, short to medium term effort, coordinated with bilateral donors, MINUSTAH, and the Core Group to stabilize troubled areas in inner and secondary cities of Haiti. Once the parameters of the DSI are finalized, small civilian teams would deploy to these areas to focus on three aspects of Haiti's transition: improving

law and order, increasing the effectiveness of local governance, and enhancing the coordination of reconstruction assistance outside of Port-au-Prince. Carney suggested that a national coordination committee should be set up to help implement and provide guidance for the DSI. While the number of projects the DSI will undertake and its level of funding remain to be decided, the Ambassador reassured his interlocutors the resources the USG plans to commit to this initiative will not come from other USG aid programs in Haiti. He suggested the time horizon for the DSI could be two or three years. The Ambassador reported that President-elect Preval, who wants to increase the Haitian Government's focus on areas outside of Port-au-Prince, had responded favorably to a general briefing about the DSI. Carney said a USG design team would arrive in Port-au-Prince on April 24 for consultations with MINUSTAH, other UN agencies, international financial institutions, and Core Group members on the structure of the DSI, and asked the Secretariat to support this visit.

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Guehenno: We "Very Much Welcome" Your Approach

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¶4. (SBU) While he reserved specific comments on the DSI until more of the details are known, U/SYG Guehenno "very much welcomed" the initiative as a means to show the Haitian people positive results from their democratic transition and to buttress the legitimacy of Haitian political institutions.

He agreed that Haiti needed a bottom-up reconstruction effort to address structural weaknesses in the police, justice, corrections, and budgeting process and that current plans and resources fail to address the short and medium term period following national elections. Despite the controversy over the MOU between the UN and Haiti on police reform -- which he ascribed in part to Interim Government of Haiti

(IGOH) Prime Minister Latortue's unreliability -- Guehenno argued the UN would need a similar legal arrangement to take on a larger role in justice reform. Addressing all of Haiti's challenges, Guehenno observed, would require the broad engagement of the international community and support from Haitians. In order to attract more qualified Haitians to serve in local government, Guehenno suggested that members of the Haitian diaspora in the U.S. and elsewhere be encouraged to return to their homeland. While noting that Preval emphasized the importance of the diaspora during his visit to New York, Guehenno acknowledged that Haitian exiles would need financial incentives to return to Haiti.

¶5. (SBU) Guehenno observed that while the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) approach adopted in Afghanistan "had some good aspects and some bad," the DSI would be different because it would be entirely under civilian leadership. The important question, he suggested, would be how the DSI links up with the UN and other donors. Drawing on the example of Afghanistan, the U/SYG suggested that the UN and the Haitians could act as co-chairs of the national coordination committee to ensure no duplication of effort. At the local level, heads of UN provincial offices could convene smaller groups of donors and Haitian authorities to coordinate the work of the DSI. Guehenno noted that with the arrival of Deputy SRSG Larry Rossin, MINUSTAH would focus more on coordinating international assistance efforts in Haiti than it had in the past. He also said MINUSTAH would become more involved in the actual reconstruction effort by using funds from the Inter-American Development Bank to support small-scale projects by the engineering battalions assigned to MINUSTAH. Guehenno agreed that UN funds and programs (e.g. arms of the UN other than DPKO) should also focus more on Haiti's provinces, and said that he had encouraged them to do so.

DPA: Security and Three-Year Commitment Are Key

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¶6. (SBU) DPA A/SYG Kane, accompanied by Electoral Assistance Division Officer Marco Carmignani and other DPA officials, greeted Carney's briefing on the DSI with enthusiasm. Kane noted that insecurity in particular had limited Interim Cooperation Framework (ICF) disbursement because projects could not go forward. Welcoming the USG's multi-year commitment to the DSI, Kane complained that the Secretariat is under pressure to devise a "sunset timeline" for MINUSTAH even though Haiti will need international assistance for many years to come. DPA Haiti officer Detlev Wilke noted that the effort to design the DSI could dovetail well with the UN's plans to send a mission to Haiti in early June to consider changes to MINUSTAH's mandate after the inauguration of the new government. Kane added that there is widespread interest in making Haiti an initial test case for the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), which might have implications for the DSI.

#### Local and Municipal Elections Still Far Off

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¶7. (SBU) Recalling that local governance is an important pillar of the DSI, Carney underscored that timely municipal and local elections are essential for Haiti's political transition. Carmignani reported that while MINUSTAH elections chief LeChevalier believes municipal elections can be combined with July by-elections from the first round of parliamentary voting, local elections would be more difficult to arrange. While he agreed that local elections are essential to the task of improving local governance, Carmignani averred that the following issues need to be resolved before such a vote can be held:

-- Financial capacity: the central government does not have the resources to pay the salaries of 9,000 local officials and provide them with offices.

-- UN funding gap: MINUSTAH currently faces an USD 18 million gap in its budget for local and municipal elections.

-- Boundary delimitations: lines must be drawn to demarcate the local districts for which elections would be held.

-- CEP authority: the mandate of the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) will end with the inauguration of the President.

Carney expressed frustration, observing that local elections should have been conducted much earlier, but agreed that overcoming the obstacles outlined by Carmignani would take some time. WHA/CAR Director Nichols announced that the USG will contribute USD 4 million towards meeting the UN's funding gap for local and municipal elections. Carmignani

welcomed this contribution, but reiterated the importance of addressing the other issues described above as well.

#### Guehenno Handicaps SRSG Race

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¶8. (C) During a private lunch with Ambassador Carney, Guehenno reviewed the field of candidates vying to replace Juan Gabriel Valdes as SRSG in Haiti. He said SYG Annan had accepted that the next SRSG should come from a Latin American country, but Guehenno did not say whether that country also had to contribute troops to MINUSTAH. Guehenno did mention that former Mexican Foreign Minister Jorge Castaneda had been ruled out in part because Mexico is not deeply involved in MINUSTAH. The U/SYG said the following officials would be interviewed for the SRSG position soon:

-- Uruguay's Carlos Perez del Castillo (former candidate for World Trade Organization SYG)

-- Uruguay's Renzo Pomi (head of Amnesty International in New York City)

-- Peru's Alberto Thaiz (current head of the Decentralization Ministry)

-- Guatemala's Gert Rosenthal (former UN PermRep)

-- Guatemala's Edmund Mullet (former Ambassador to Belgium)

-- Trinidad's Colin Granderson (Assistant SYG of CARICOM)

While noting all decisions about SRSB positions are ultimately taken by SYG Annan and his staff with advice from Guehenno, DPKO political officers told Poloff separately that they believe Rosenthal is the front-runner in the race given his impressive tenure as Guatemalan PermRep to the UN. They also discounted the candidacies of Thaiz and Pomi due to uninspiring reviews the Secretariat has received from several sources. While acknowledging that some believe Colin Granderson would be received unfavorably in Haiti due to his leadership of the 1993-1994 OAS Civilian Observer Mission there, they said they do not share such fears.

Comment: Rosenthal Is an Impressive Candidate

19. (C) Gert Rosenthal has had a distinguished career as a senior advisor to Guatemalan political leaders and has the reputation of elder statesman at home. He was a natural choice to spearhead Guatemala's uphill battle to defeat Venezuela for a seat on the Security Council this year. With his experience as the chief of ECLAC, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America, Rosenthal became widely and favorably known throughout the region and beyond and is using his contacts to good effect on Guatemala's behalf. He is thoughtful and astute and displays considerable diplomatic skill. Although some might find his low-key approach not aggressive enough, he was tough enough to survive the turbulent decades of Guatemala's bloody internal wars, gaining respect from all factions in the process.

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